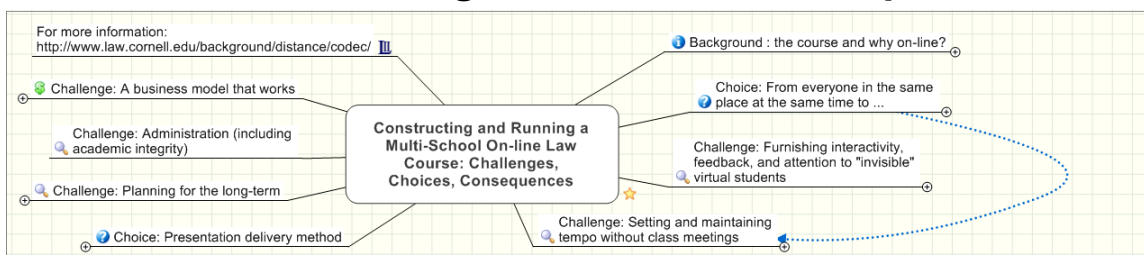


Constructing and Running a Multi-School On-line Law Course: Challenges, Choices, Consequences



1 Background : the course and why on-line?

1.1 *Upperclass, technical elective*

The courses - Social Security (6 years), copyright in several different settings.

Upperclass - Students don't have to be introduced to the basic skills and requirements of law study; they bring not only these assets but also fairly definite expectations about how a law school course is conducted (and taken).

Technical - A statutory course similar to federal income tax or commercial law in its complexity and precision, although containing plenty of zones of indeterminacy rich with advocacy potential.

1.2 *Why?*

1.2.1 Teacher

Opportunity to teach in area of special interest, when enrollment at home institution would not support the course on a regular basis.

Opportunity to work with students with a wider range of experience and commitment to the topic than found in home institution.

The ability to teach free from the time and place requirements of the classroom.

1.2.2 Students

The ability to study an important area of the law not otherwise covered in his/her school's curriculum.

Great flexibility in fitting course work into dense schedules.

1.2.3 Participating schools

A means of enriching the curriculum at very modest cost.

1.3 *Large class, drawn from multiple schools*

75-100 students rather than a seminar of 16 or a small section of 25- 30. The size has direct consequences on pedagogy and realistic options for interaction.

1.4 *Significant number of part-time students*

On average, older, more focused and juggling other commitments (family, employment).

More likely to be commuting than living proximate to the law school.

For these reasons place a higher value on being able to take a course that does not require presence in the classroom or clinic at scheduled times even when its full work load is equal or greater.

1.5 Students' dominant environment - classroom-based degree programs

The students need to be forewarned and then repetitively reminded of the differentness of the course methods and requirements.

Inevitably the course will be benchmarked against courses of comparable content, conventionally offered.

Continuously the course will be competing for student time and attention with class-room based and clinical courses, instruction that at least nominally insists on regular weekly performance.

2 Choice: From everyone in the same place at the same time to ...

See also: [Challenge: Setting and maintaining tempo without class meetings](#)

2.1 Synchronous presentation and exchange

2.2 Totally asynchronous

2.2.1 Self-paced

2.2.2 Paced, parallel

2.3 From students - Interactivity

See document: [seals_p2.mmp](#)

2.3.1 From students - Not for everyone

See document: [seals_p5.mmp](#)

3 Challenge: Furnishing interactivity, feedback, and attention to "invisible" virtual students

3.1 Examples

3.1.1 End of topic problems

See document: [topic06_e.smi](#)

3.1.2 Mastery exercises

See document: [me_1_04.htm](#)

3.1.3 On-line discussion

See document: [WebX_0.htm](#)

3.2 From students - Interactivity

See document: [seals_p3.mmp](#)

3.3 From students - Mastery exercises

See document: [seals_p4.mmp](#)

3.4 An environment in which virtual students leave tracks and are regularly invited to comment or post questions

3.5 A helper (teaching assistant)

4 Challenge: Setting and maintaining tempo without class meetings

4.1 Cues and requirements

See document: [syllabus.htm](#)

5 Choice: Presentation delivery method

5.1 Video versus audio

5.2 Audio versus audio plus

See document: [topic06_a.smi](#)

5.3 Role and delivery of written materials

6 🗎 Challenge: Planning for the long-term

6.1 An asynchronous course only makes sense in the long-term

6.2 Maintenance issues bear on choice of delivery method

7 🗎 Challenge: Administration (including academic integrity)

8 🗎 Challenge: A business model that works

8.1 Works for the course creator

8.2 Works for the sponsoring institution

8.3 Works for receiving institutions

8.4 Works for students

9 For more information:

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/background/distance/codec/>

See document: [codec](#)